

# IU GROUP ESG REPORT 2023





This company is part of the global movement for an inclusive, equitable, and regenerative economic system.



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53 54

# **BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE THROUGH EDUCATION: OUR JOURNEY IN 2023**



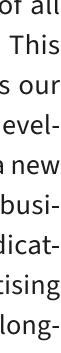
**SVEN SCHÜTT,** CEO OF IU GROUP

"We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to pursue their individual learning journey, regardless of background or circumstances."

As we reflect on our journey over the past year, I am proud to share with you the progress we have made in advancing our commitment to sustainability and excellence in education. Building upon the foundation laid in previous years, 2023 has been marked by significant developments that underscore our dedication to making a positive impact on society.

This year, IU Group achieved a significant environmental and social considerations alongmilestone by obtaining certification as a B

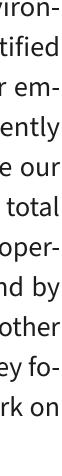
Corporation following a thorough audit of all aspects of our organisation's activities. This prestigious recognition not only reaffirms our unwavering commitment to sustainable development but also signifies our elevation to a new level of responsibility in conducting our business operations. As a B Corp, we are dedicated to balancing profit with purpose, prioritising side financial performance.





At IU Group, our commitment to democratising access to education remains steadfast. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to pursue their individual learning journey, regardless of background or circumstances. Through innovation and strategic partnerships, we aim to provide affordable, high-quality education to underserved communities worldwide. We are embracing the transformative potential of artificial intelligence in revolutionising the education sector. Recognising the growing role of AI, we are committed to pioneering AI-based solutions to enhance learning outcomes and accessibility for all students. Our efforts to address the widening skills gap have yielded tangible results, with the largest portfolio of future skills degrees globally and a vast network of Dual-Studies partners.

Moreover, we remain committed to environmental sustainability, maintaining our certified climate-neutral status primarily due to our emphasis on distance learning, which inherently reduces our environmental footprint. While our corporate carbon footprint has increased in total terms due to the significant growth of our operations, our carbon intensity per student and by revenue both remain very low compared to other providers of higher education. It will be a key focus for our team in the coming years to work on maintaining and further improving this. would like to express my gratitude to our partners, students and to our growing team for their continued support and partnership as we strive to create a more sustainable and equitable future through education. Together, we will continue to innovate, inspire, and empower students to achieve their full potential.



# EVERYBODY

We are inclusive and non-elitist for global talents

# EDUCATION

Our offering ranges from higher education to nano degrees



Our offering is accessible and affordable

# GROW

We drive individual progress through high-quality, career-oriented education





# **ABOUT IU GROUP**

#### IU Group offers a vertically integrated educational platform with the largest portfolio of bachelor's and master's degree programmes in Europe.

Being Germany's largest private university group and Europe's fastest growing provider of higher education, we deliver high-quality study programmes, leveraging technology and innovation to meet the rapidly changing demands and needs of the labour market as well as of students. IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU), the main institution of higher education managed by IU Group, offers more than 250 certified courses, available in German or English. Students can shape their studies in their own way with the help of a digitally supported learning environment that features various study models, such as dual studies, distance learning and myStudies, which combines online and on-campus studies. In addition, we facilitate continuing education and promote the idea of University of Fredericton. lifelong learning.

In alignment with our mission, we aim to provide access to personalised education to as many people worldwide as possible. IU Group is pioneering the integration of AI in higher education, leveraging the technology to revolutionise the learning experience – reducing course completion times, personalising exam preparation, and improving learning outcomes.

IU was established in 1998 and is now represented in over 30 German cities. We cooperate with over 15,000 companies and actively support them in employee development. Our partners include Motel One, Telekom, and Vodafone. From 2023, IU Group is also represented in the United Kingdom and in Canada by The London Institute of Banking and Finance and the



>250

master's and bachelor's

programmes offered

#### over 130,000 students

(+ over 25% year-on-year)

over 6,000 graduates of bachelor's, master's, and **MBA programmes** (+52% year-on-year)

institutions of higher education in Germany, the United Kingdom, and Canada

master's and 65 bachelor's degree programmes in English (up from 30 last year)

70 study locations and offices

\* All numbers as of the end of 2023 unless stated otherwise



# **OUR HISTORY**

2000

The foundation of IU as the International University of Applied Sciences Bad Honnef (IUBH)

	as
Admission to the "Leading Hotel	IU
Schools of the World" network	th
IUBH becomes the first and only German	of
university to be accepted into the "Leading Hotel	of
Schools of the World" network. The exclusive	Mi
association Hotel Schools of Distinction	Ge
emerged from this network in 2014.	th

2003

2004



1998

Launch of the first learning programmes at the Feuerschlösschen Castle in Bad Honnef

Presented with a Hospitality Studies concept award IUBH becomes the first German university to be awarded the hotel industry's Oscar, the Hotelier of the Year Award, for its outstanding study concept.

#### Geographic expansion, institutional accreditation

Bad Reichenhall is opened as a new branch of the IUBH. UBH unconditionally receives he longest possible accreditation of 10 years from the German Council of Science and Humanities. Innovation linister of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, Prof. Andreas Pinkwart, congratulates he institution on this achievement.

#### Launch of distance learning courses

IUBH launches its first distance learning programme. The institution is renamed the International University of Applied Sciences Bad Honnef – Bonn.

#### **UN PRME** signatory member

IUBH becomes a signatory member of the International Academic Network of the <u>UN PRME</u> <u>Network</u>, an initiative for responsible and sustainable academic management education.

2009

2010

certificate to IUBH"s tourism programme.

2011

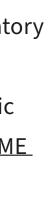
2012

#### Further recognition IUBH becomes a member of the German University Rector Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz). The United Nations World Tourism Organization awards the UNWTO Tedqual

#### New locations and sustainability

Düsseldorf and Munich become the first dualcampus locations to be opened besides Erfurt. IUBH commits to the principles of sustainability by joining the United Nations Global Compact.













#### **Online exams**

IUBH launches its first online degree programme and becomes the first provider of higher education worldwide to launch online exams.

IUBH receives the **Innovation and Excellence** Award 2017 for innovative study programmes.

#### **Climate neutrality**

IUBH receives its first PAS 2060 climate neutrality certification and becomes one of the world's first climate-neutral providers of higher education. A total of 36,000 students are enrolled, representing 110 countries and spread across 80 different study programmes. Twenty-nine new study programmes are launched and eight new locations are opened. IUBH becomes the first provider of higher education to launch an online architecture study programme.

#### 2014

2016

2017

2018

Top rankings and premium seal

IUBH achieves excellent results in the CHE university ranking. In terms of business administration, IUBH positions itself as Germany's best private university of applied



sciences, with the most rankings in the top group. IUBH's five study programmes in the fields of hotel management, tourism and event management receive the premium seal of the FIBAA. This qualifies IUBH as one of the leading universities in Germany, with five or more premium seals.

#### New locations and accreditation

IUBH launches a part-time study format at Düsseldorf and Munich for the business administration and social work study offer for school graduates, as well programmes. IUBH becomes system as IU Academy as a new upskilling accredited. Over 15,000 students are programme for corporate partners. IUBH is renamed IU International enrolled in 80 degree programmes. More than 500 permanent professors, lecturers, University of Applied and employees work for IUBH in research, Sciences to emphasise lecturing, consulting, and administration. its international profile.

#### **Developing a global AI-based sustainable education offering**

The London Institute of Banking and Finance (UK) and the University of Fredericton (Canada) become part of IU Group, marking historical steps towards international expansion. IU International University of Applied Sciences joins the Association of African Universities. Following a rigorous assessment of its environmental, social, and corporate governance profile, IU Group becomes a certified B Corporation, joining a global community of sustainability-oriented organisations. IU is the first university in the world to use an AI learning buddy, Syntea, which has been accompanying students in their personal learning process since the beginning of the year.

2020

2021

2022

1 5 6 P

2023

This year sees the commercial launch of the new, innovative MyStudium

Evolving to fulfil our mission

#### Scale and quality

The IU student body reaches 100,000. IU is the largest provider of higher education in Europe and the largest university of applied sciences in Germany by the number of students.

IU receives the Very Good Provider Award and is included in the list of top distance-learning providers. IU is ranked number 1 among the most popular universities on <u>StudyCheck</u> thanks to its dual studies programme. The university achieved this while maintaining a recommendation rating of 96%.

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# OUR APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY



# **OUR APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability is among the core values of IU Group and its educational institutions.

As a member of the UN Global Compact and UNGC's higher education initiative, IU International University of Applied Sciences is committed to the highest standards of sustainability to benefit all its stakeholders. The key principles behind these two initiatives define our sustainability approach.

Given the nature of IU Group's work, the social aspect plays a key role in our sustainability profile. We have identified three key areas of social impact, as defined by the relevant stakeholders:

- Apart from that, two further areas of ESG are relevant for IU Group, just as for any other organisation:
  - Our environmental footprint
  - Our corporate governance

We have structured our ESG Report in accordance with this approach.

- Our students
- Our employees
- Our communities









# BUILDING A MORE PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS FUTURE WITH THE UN SDGS

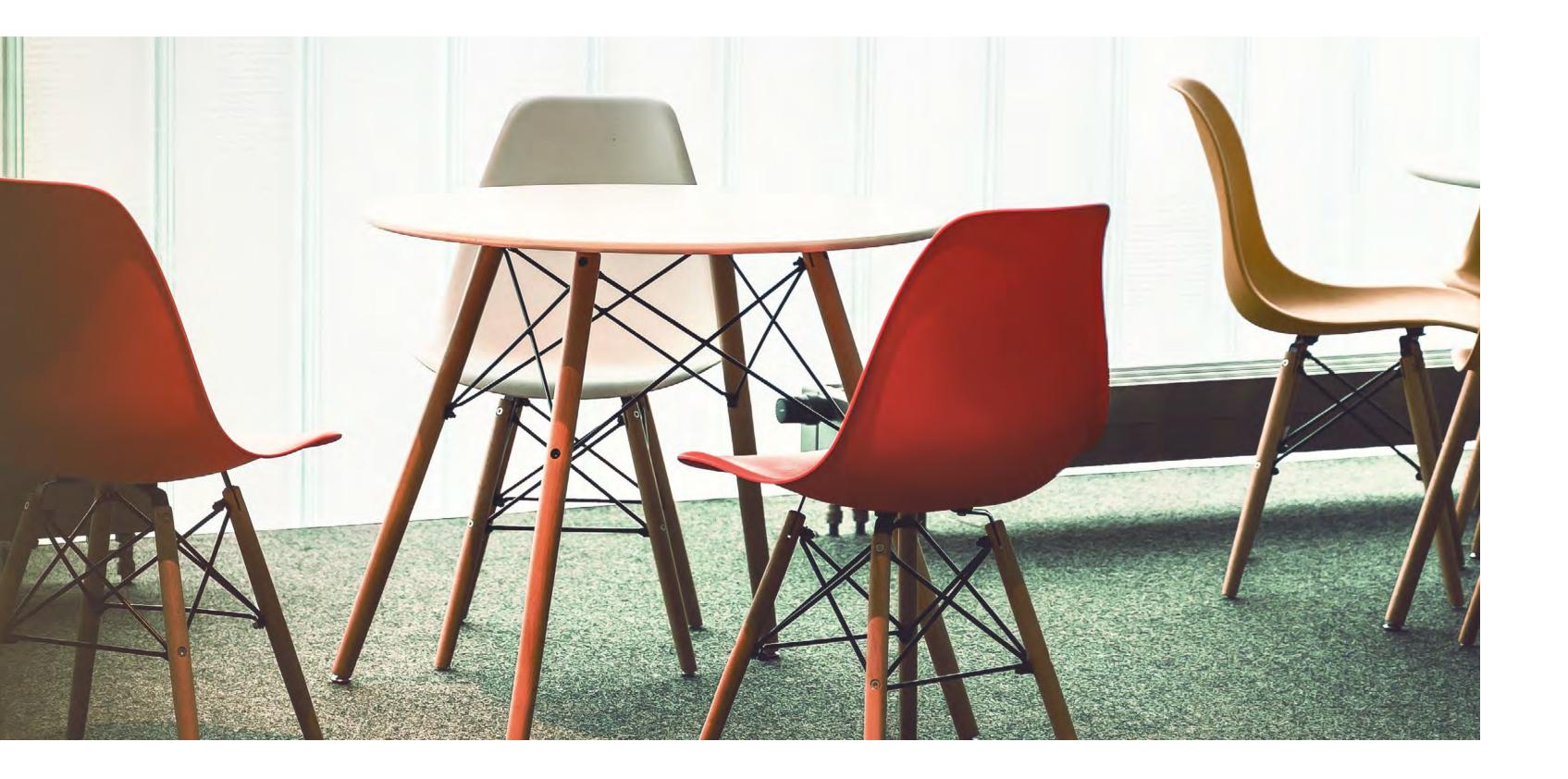
# SUSTAINABLE GEALS

The UN sustainable development goals provide a series of benchmarks and targets for the future growth and development of humanity. As part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the goals act as a blueprint for creating a future that is peaceful and prosperous for all people, all over the world. The 17 SDGs seek to address a wide range of challenges that we face today – from tackling poverty, hunger, and inequality, to addressing climate change and building worldwide partnerships. Equal access to a high-quality education is a key pillar of the agenda and is related to several of the SDGs. To this end, IU Group operates within the framework of the sustainable development goals to help bring about the UN's shared vision for a better world. The challenges addressed by the SDGs are interconnected, and to achieve the greatest impact on sustainability and future prosperity it is important to work in many directions at once within the framework.





Making real progress on the SDGs takes more than a committed vision and philosophy. It requires a professional approach, with our vision and ideals being matched by practical activities and projects, achieving sustainable certification at the highest levels, and more.





#### Goal 1: No poverty

End poverty in all its forms everywhere See case studies on pp. 37, 45



#### Goal 3: **Good health** and well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages See case studies on pp. 32, 37, 44, 45, 46



#### Goal 2: **Zero hunger**

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture See case studies on pp. 39



#### Goal 4: **Quality education**

Ensure inclusive and equitable high-quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all See case studies on pp. 20, 21, 22, 32, 33, 34, 44









#### Goal 5: **Gender equality**

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls See case studies on pp. 20, 21, 22, 27, 33, 36, 39, 44, 45, 46



#### **Goal 11:** Sustainable cities and communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable See case studies

on pp. 21, 36, 38



#### Goal 6: **Clean water** and sanitation

Ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all See case studies

on pp. 44, 46



#### Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all See case studie on pp. 45, 46



#### **Goal 12:** Responsible consumption and production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns See case studies on pp. 34, 35, 36, 38, 45, 53



#### **Goal 13: Climate action**

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts See case studies on pp. 39, 44, 45, 46



#### Goal 8: **Decent work** and economic growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all See case studie on pp.

20, 23, 28, 36, 38, 39, 45, 53



#### **Goal 15:** Life on land

Protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss See case studies on pp. 45



#### Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation See case studies on pp. 20, 23, 34, 36, 38, 54



#### **Goal 10: Reduced inequalities**

Reduce inequality within and among countries See case studie on pp. 20, 21, 23, 27, 32, 33, 37, 39, 53



#### **Goal 16:** Peace, justice, and strong institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

See case studies on pp. 53, 54



#### Goal 17: **Partnerships** for the goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development See case studies on pp. 20, 34, 35, 37



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#### IU International University of Applied Sciences is a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, as well as a member of the Global Compact Network Germany.

It is committed to the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact, which are derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organisation's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and **Principle 2:** make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

#### LABOUR

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

**Principle 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; **Principle 5:** the effective abolition of child labour; and **Principle 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

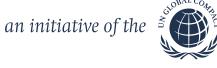
#### **ENVIRONMENT**

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges; **Principle 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and **Principle 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

#### **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.





IU International University of Applied Sciences is a member of PRME, an initiative of the UN Global Compact that unites institutions of higher education. PRME works to promote the following principles in the education sector worldwide.

#### **PURPOSE**

We advance responsible management education to foster inclusive prosperity in a world of thriving ecosystems.

#### VALUES

We place organisational responsibility and accountability to society and the planet at the core of what we do.

#### **TEACH** We transform our learning environments by

integrating responsible management concepts and practices into our curriculum and pedagogy.

#### RESEARCH

We study people, organisations, institutions, and the state of the world to inspire responsible management and education practice.

#### PARTNER

We engage people from business, government, civil society, and academia to

advance responsible and accountable management education and practice.

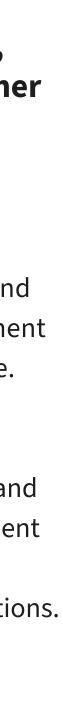
#### PRACTICE

We adopt responsible and accountable management principles in our own governance and operations.

#### **SHARE**

We share our successes and failures with each other to enable our collective learning and best live our common values and purpose.







## **IU GROUP AS A CERTIFIED B** CORPORATION



In November 2023, IU Group earned the status of a certified B Corporation. This is a significant achievement that underscores our commitment to environmental, social, and governance excellence and marks a milestone in our journey towards maximising our positive societal impact.

The certification process was an extensive twoyear endeavour that involved adjusting our articles of association and a meticulous assessment covering every aspect of our operations. From scrutinising our environmental footprint to evaluating our engagement with students, communities, employees, and governance, the assessment was a comprehensive exploration of our organisational practices. This achievement wouldn't have been possible without the collaborative efforts of dozens of managers across IU

Group who played a pivotal role in this journey. Being accepted into the global community of certified B Corporations is not just an accolade – it opens doors to exciting opportunities for learning and collaboration. We now have the chance to engage with like-minded organisations, share insights, and participate in collective projects and initiatives that align with our commitment to sustainability.

Our journey towards sustainability is only beginning, as the status of a B Corporation is above all a commitment to do more. This will require participation from each of us, especially when it comes to minimising our carbon footprint and reducing resource usage; we all need to consider sustainability in our daily decision making, as well as in our cooperation with stakeholders, partners, and suppliers.

## **NEW ADDITIONS TO IU GROUP: LIBF AND UFRED**

In 2023, IU Group became a conglomerate of academic institutions in three different countries that share a vision for a more sustainable future. This year, the UK-based London Institute of Banking and Finance (LIBF) and the Canada-based University of Fredericton (UFred) became a part of IU Group. This became a transformative step both for IU Group and for LIBF and UFred, opening the way to expanding our common commitment to sustainable practices and to promoting sustainability in education and research.

The London Institute of Banking and Finance has been deeply committed to sustainability and social responsibility for many years of its history, as demonstrated by various initiatives.

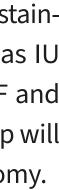
LIBF recently commissioned a detailed energy audit which scrutinised energy usage and recommended strategies for reducing its carbon footprint, resulting in a sustainability improvement programme in LIBF's



office in central London. The institution has a well-being commitment for all its staff and students, and it implements relevant policies and programmes. LIBF actively supports and encourages its thriving Women in Finance Student Society, fostering an environment of gender equality both within the institution and more widely in the financial services sector. Given the finance sector's critical role in supporting the sustainable transformation of the economy, LIBF is producing and curating thought leadership on ESG-related issues such as green finance. LIBF ensures that sustainability remains a key consideration for its students and the next generation of banking and finance professionals through its learning offerings.

As of 2023, group-wide standards on sustainability and social responsibility such as IU Group's Ethics Code also apply to LIBF and UFred, while the institutions of IU Group will maintain a significant degree of autonomy.



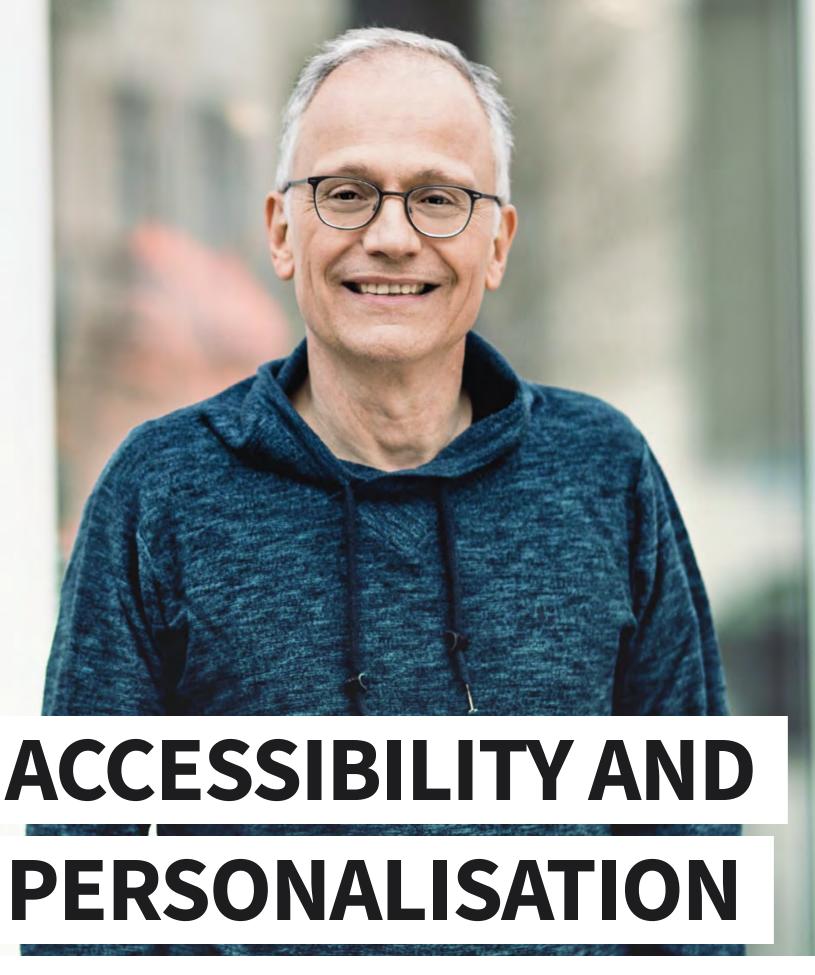


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# STUDENTS





# **OF EDUCATION WITH**

# THE HELP OF AI



HOLGER SOMMERFELDT, **RECTOR OF IU INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES** 

**"Growing student numbers** underscore our unwavering commitment to reaching learners worldwide and our growing responsibility to offer high-quality, personalised education to them."

In the ever-evolving global education landscape, IU Group remains steadfast in its mission of providing accessible, high-quality education to learners worldwide. Since our last report, IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) has experienced significant growth. After surpassing the historic milestone of 100,000 students in sponsibility to offer high-quality, personalised 2022, by the end of 2023, our student body had

expanded to more than 130,000 individuals from diverse backgrounds and geographical locations. Growing student numbers underscore our unwavering commitment to reaching learners worldwide, ensuring that education transcends geographical boundaries, and our growing reeducation to them.







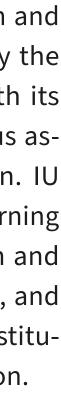


Our dedication to accessibility of education remains resolute. We continue to offer scholarships to individuals from low-income countries; furthermore, our programmes aimed at empowering underrepresented groups, such as women in IT and tech, have continued to thrive. At IU Group, we prioritise the success and well-being of our students. Through personalised support and guidance, we endeavour to empower every learner to realise their full

sustainable future as responsible entrepreneurs, professionals, and citizens. At IU, students can opt for digital course materials, saving tons of paper. Over 33,000 trees have already been planted; more than 310,000 printed pages have already been saved. IU supports the unique ideas of its students, who contribute to the future of sustainability in virtual classrooms. While we acknowledge the persistent challenges posed by the macroeconomic environment,

potential. Our flexible learning options accommodate diverse lifestyles and commitments, ensuring that education remains within reach for all. Our graduates continue to excel in their careers, demonstrating the tangible benefits of an IU degree. For our students, we want sustainability to be more than just a buzzword. We want them to actively implement sustainable practices in education, industry, and beyond, shaping a

we view them as opportunities for growth and innovation. The present era is marked by the proliferation of artificial intelligence, with its immense potential to revolutionise various aspects of human life, including education. IU Group is actively integrating AI into our learning processes to enhance the personalisation and accessibility of education – both at the IU, and now at our newly joined international institutions, LIBF and the University of Fredericton.







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5 ECANDER EDUCATION
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
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## **STUDY ACCESS ALLIANCE**



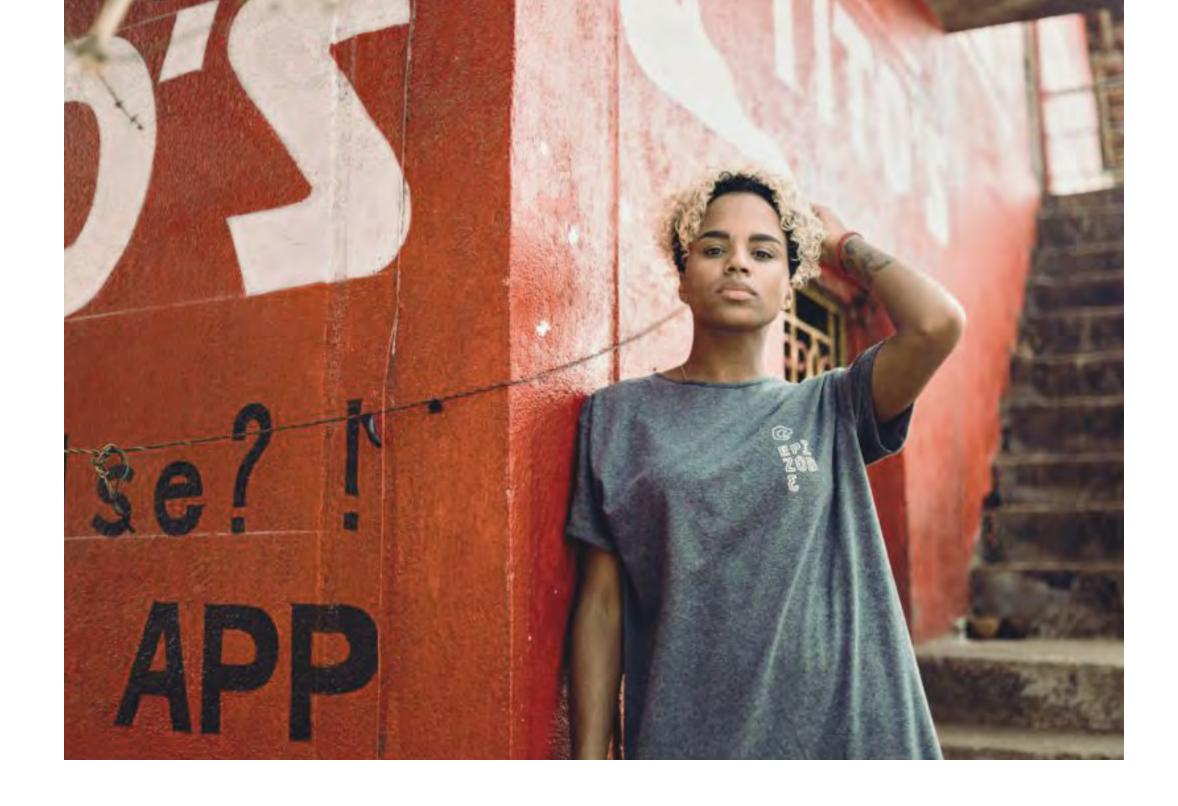
**STUDY** ACCESS ALLIANCE

The Study Access Alliance (SAA) is a scholarship provider for students in African countries who are financially unable to fund their university education. Since only ~9% of the university-aged population in Sub-Saharan Africa is enrolled in higher education (around 4 times less than the world average), the aim of the Study Access Alliance is to empower the young people of Africa with skills for the future through education, including high-quality online bachelor's and master's degrees in a variety of study programmes.

SAA was initiated in 2022 and works with various organisations to support financially disadvantaged students locally. IU Group has participated in the initiative from its establishment. SAA has already begun awarding scholarships and is currently working with IU International University to offer a variety of online degree programmes. In addition, local African partners offer support through soft-skills training, mentoring, and internships. SAA cooperates with partners in Kenya, Uganda, Senegal, and Cameroon, offering empower communities in need.

online scholarships that are less than 10% of the regular tuition fees, with the balance being covered by funding partners. The initiative is continuously looking for new sponsors and partners, especially funding partners and organisations that can provide students with training and internship opportunities to ensure a smooth transition into the labour market.

In early 2024, the Study Access Alliance partnered with RLabs to achieve the joint goal of awarding a total of 2,000 scholarships for online bachelor's programmes to young people in Africa by the end of 2024 – following that, it plans to raise further funding to increase the number of scholarship holders to 10,000. Utilising the Youth Agency Market Place (Yoma), a digital marketplace co-founded by UNICEF and offering free online opportunities to build skills and connect young people, the SAA-RLabs partnership will catalyse accessible higher education for young people who have traditionally lacked it, helping





Sven Schütt, **CEO of IU Group** 

"It is fundamental to us at IU Group that all people have access to education and growth, which is why we are proud to partner with the Study Access Alliance."





4 QUALITY EDUCATION	5 GENDER EQUALITY	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
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## **FOSTERING GENDER DIVERSITY AMONG IU STUDENTS**

IU Group is deeply committed to promoting gender diversity among the student body of its educational institutions. We prioritise creating an inclusive environment where all students, regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, or other factors, feel valued and respected.

In 2022, female students constituted 62% of the enrolment at IU International University of Applied Sciences, with 396 students identifying as gender-diverse, comprising 0.3% of the total student population. Notably, the percentage of gender-diverse students at IU is steadily increasing, reflecting our commitment to embrac- discrimination, and empowers all students ing diversity.

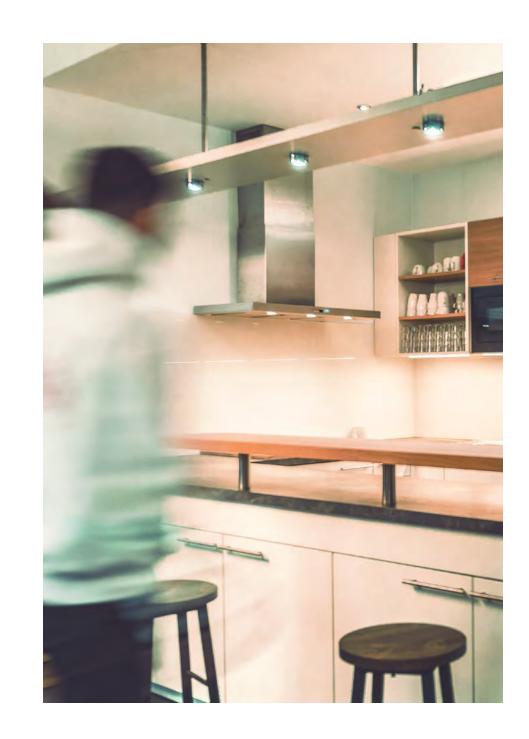
Moreover, both female and gender-diverse students exhibit higher retention rates compared to their male counterparts, although this trend may be temporary. IU Group remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering an educational environment that celebrates diversity, rejects to excel.





## **CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY AT IU INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES**

IU Group places a high priority on ensuring that its campuses and offices are accessible to all students, regardless of their physical capabilities.



Recognising that accessibility is essential for providing equitable learning opportunities, IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU), our flagship institution, conducted a thorough review of its facilities in 2023. The review found that while a majority of campuses and offices are accessible, there are areas for improvement, particularly in terms of adaptable toilets. Despite these challenges, IU is actively working to enhance the accessibility of its facilities. By investing in infrastructural changes, IU aims to make all campuses fully or partially accessible by the end of 2024. This initiative will benefit a significant portion of the student body, demonstrating IU's commitment to creating an educational environment where every student can study comfortably and effectively.





## **WOMEN IN TECH**

Women in Tech is an initiative at IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) aimed at attracting more girls and women to the IT industry. Spearheaded by Chancellor Prof. Dr. Alexandra Wuttig and Public Affairs Officer Lena Sälzle, this initiative seeks to eliminate gender disparities in the tech sector by providing accessible opportunities and promoting female role models. By addressing stereotypes and increasing visibility, IU is committed to fostering a more inclusive environment within STEM fields. Through initiatives like YES SHE CAN, FRIDA, and the IU Scholarship for Women in STEM Studies, IU is making significant strides towards creating a more equitable and accessible pathway for women in tech.

#### **YES SHE CAN**

In March 2023, IU organised German and English events under the banner of YES SHE CAN, attracting more than 150 women from 27 countries. The initiative aimed to spark interest in digitalisation, offer free educational



opportunities, showcase IT career pathways, and address socially relevant issues. The overwhelming participation and positive feedback underscored the global significance of the initiative, highlighting IU's commitment to empowering women in tech.

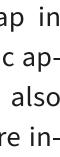
#### FRIDA

FRIDA, a collaborative project between IU, the #SheTransformsIT initiative, and Bitkom, has emerged as a powerful vehicle for promoting gender diversity in tech. Through a dynamic social media campaign, FRIDA showcased 21 inspir-**IU SCHOLARSHIP FOR** ing women in tech and IT roles, emphasising the **WOMEN IN STEM STUDIES** importance of visible role models. By amplifying working towards closing the gender gap in the voices of female innovators and disseminat-Recognising the need for proactive measures to STEM education and careers. This strategic aping insights into various career paths, FRIDA aims address gender disparities in IT, IU offers speproach not only promotes diversity but also to inspire the next generation of women in tech. cialised scholarships to encourage more womcontributes to the development of a more in-The success of its inaugural season paved the en to pursue careers in tech-related fields. By clusive tech ecosystem. way for continued engagement, with plans for removing financial barriers and fostering a supanother impactful year in 2024. portive learning environment, IU is actively CO More information















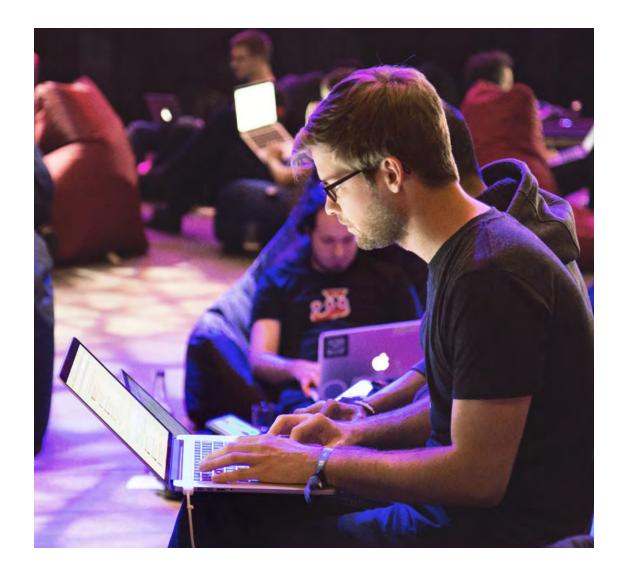
## **FOUNDERS@IU**

Launched in January 2022, Founders@IU serves as a hub for the IU International University of Applied Sciences community, particularly students and alumni, who are interested in entrepreneurship. Building on its early successes, the initiative thrived throughout 2023.

Through various engagements, such as four illuminating interviews with founders and professors, we've shed light on the entrepreneurial journey. A notable networking event on 12 May, led by Founders@IU, underscored our commitment to fostering meaningful connections.

Experts from IU International University of Applied Sciences have provided valuable guidance to aspiring entrepreneurs, navigating them through the application process for an EXIST start-up scholarship from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection, resulting in the successful approval of two applications.

Furthermore, IU actively participated in conducting the 2023 iteration of the Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' **CD More information** 



Survey (GUESSS), coordinated by the University of St. Gallen and the University of Bern. This survey primarily delves into students' entrepreneurial intentions and activities, aiming to gain deeper insights into their needs concerning entrepreneurship. In the GUESSS 2023 cycle, IU assumed the role of the national coordinator for data collection in Germany, with over 1,000 students taking part.

Looking ahead to 2024, we're introducing Foundly, a chatbot offering tailored guiding budding entrepreneurs, alongside a series of upcoming networking events.





# **A CULTURE** OF EVERYONE, **BY EVERYONE**

At IU Group, our mission is all about empowering people – both our students around the globe with personalised education and our staff by catering a diverse, entrepreneurial, and future-oriented environment in which to thrive. We believe the diversity of our staff is pivotal for the success of our organisation, and that it is critical to foster diversity among our students, who have chosen the institutions of IU Group for a life-changing education. With close to 39% female professors and 57% of leadership roles held by women, IU International

University of Applied Sciences (IU) sets a positive opportunities, as well as by external reports and our students' success stories. outlook on achieving gender parity. sional landscape. Diversity is an integral cornerstone of our vision IU is built for people. It is about people and their Given the nature of our business services, we "everybody can access education to grow", which diversity of stories, origins, beliefs, thoughts, also offer our employees discounted profesis also a key driver for talent to consider IU as an capabilities, and skills. Thus, as a learning orsional development programmes, with 19% of our employees actively participating in at least employer. Through embracing diversity as an organisation, we nurture a work environment with ganisation, e.g. people from 85 nationalities are one of our learning/upskilling offers or study opportunities to learn and apply future-impactive skills, such as self-paced and instructor-led employed at IU Group, we drive innovation and programmes. Recognising the dedication of GenAI upskilling offers, eLearning courses in our employees, we cater trust-based and flexicontribute to the prosperity of our students – as evidenced by awards such as the Total E-Quality sustainability, and tailored courses to enhance ble work conditions to work remotely and from Award acknowledging our commitment to equal learning strategies for adapting to the evolving abroad where possible.



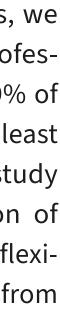
**REZA MOUSSAVIAN,** CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER AT IU GROUP

### **"Growth through** diversity and innovation."

technological demands of the modern profes-

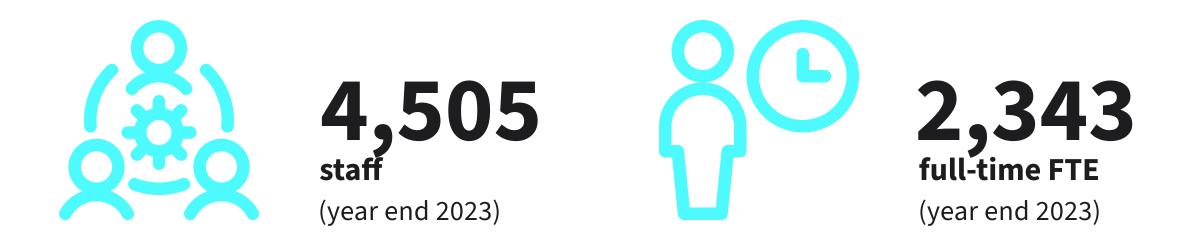














## **Staff training** in 2023:

percentage of employees who received training

33%

received skills-based training to advance their core job responsibilities

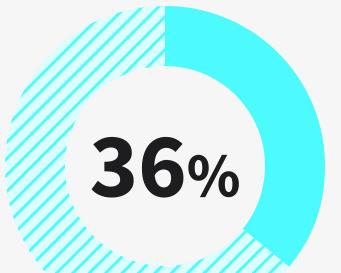
(up from 32% in 2022)



85 nationalities represented among employees

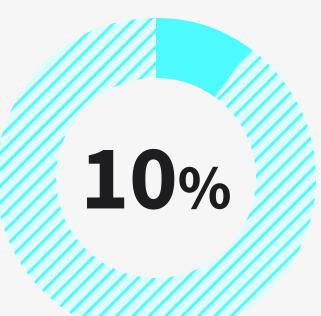


67.1 average hours spent on training per employee (up from 66.8 in 2022)

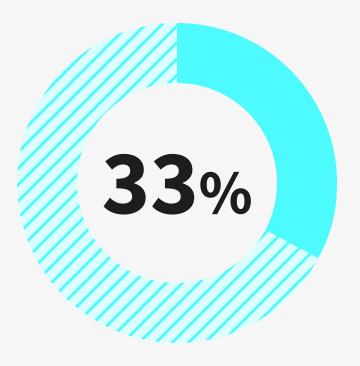


received training for cross-job functions beyond their regular responsibilities

(up from 33% in 2022)



received training on life skills for personal development (in line with 2022)



received specialised training on labour or human rights

(in line with 2022)









## IU AMONG THE LEADERS IN ACADEMIC STAFF GENDER DIVERSITY

IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) stands out in promoting gender diversity among German universities, securing the second position with 38.9% female professors in a recent analysis conducted by the Berlin/Brandenburg Consumer Protection Association (VSVBB).

IU also leads as the only institution where more faculties are headed by women than men (55.56%).

The study emphasises the broader challenge of achieving gender parity in academic roles, with an average of 27.94% female professors across surveyed institutions. Positive trends are noted in junior faculty appointments, reflecting ongoing efforts for gender equality and strong role models in academia.



## DIVERSITY DAY AT IU GROUP

IU Group commemorated Diversity Day on 23 May 2023, reaffirming our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). As signatories to the Charter of Diversity since 2019, we champion respect and inclusivity regardless of gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, ideology, age, disability, sexual orientation, or other factors. The day featured various educational activities, including a learning lunch, a session on gender-sensitive language, and a quiz.

Apart from that, our online IU Learning Hub, available to all IU Group employees, offers courses on diversity and equality, serving as a valuable resource for continuous learning.

At our second Diversity Day celebration, we embraced diversity as a core aspect of our organisational identity. Through dialogue and self-reflection, we identified strengths and areas for growth, demonstrating our commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace. Moving forward, IU Group remains dedicated to promoting diversity and equality, striving to create a workplace where every individual feels valued and empowered.

#### **CO** More information

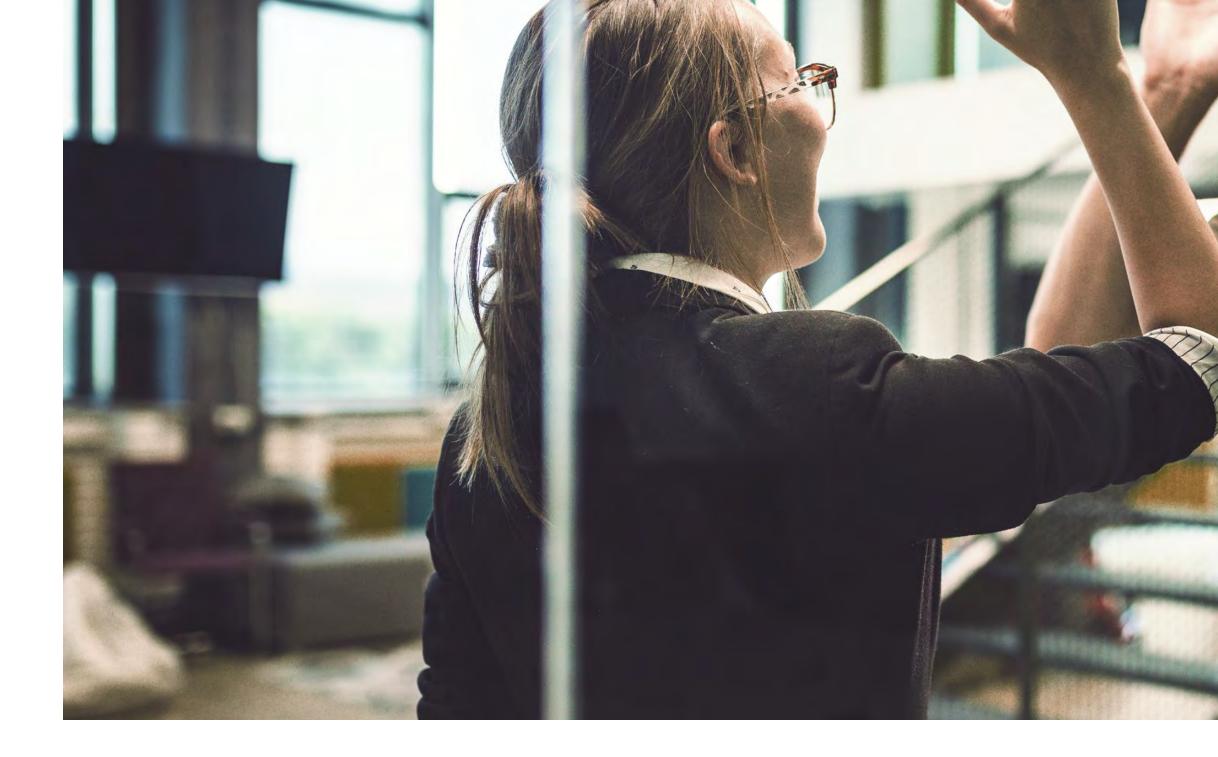




Nicola Schmidt-Geheb, Equality and Diversity Officer, IUInternational University of Applied Sciences

"Diversity is anchored in the DNA of IU Group, firmly integrated into our vision and embodied daily."







## PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT **AT IU GROUP**

As a provider of higher educational knowledge for our customers, we also seek to inspire our employees to help inspire our students. People development is an integral part of the entire employee journey at IU Group. We build and maximise strengths for possible career progression through our array of learning and development and leadership development programmes. Alongside that, IU Group identifies and fosters talent, ensures success, and boosts potential through talent management and performance management.

#### **Our approach to fostering** personal growth revolves around four foundational pillars:

- 1. Structured learning opportunities: These are facilitated by IU Group's comprehensive corporate learning management systems, namely the IU Learning Hub and IU Manager Learning Hub.
- 2. Embracing informal learning avenues: This encompasses recurrent events like Learning Lunches and Deep Dives orchestrated by our own team members to facilitate in-house skill enhancement. Additionally, we promote a buddy concept and community internships to encourage social and peer-driven learning.
- 3. Holistic, organisation-wide knowledge management: Through our well-established corporate network – primarily hosted on our intranet – we provide insights into organisational frameworks, processes, key contacts, and more.
- 4. Tailored offerings catering to specific tives: for example, the leadership induction

programme, the leadership space (a centralised hub for leadership-related information, communication, and knowledge exchange), and specialised development tracks designed for distinct roles within IU Group.

As of today, the IU Learning Hub contains more than 1,100 courses and more than 60 training plans on topics ranging from product management and sales to language skills; these are available to almost 4,800 employees, including both fixed-term employees and apprentices or trainees. Additionally, the IU Manager Learning Hub has almost 180 study courses available to approximately 880 managers.

Almost all our employees regularly use the IU Learning Hub. On average, each employee spent more than 8 days in formal and informal training during 2023, with the majority of formal training provided through the IU Learning Hub. Almost 180 courses have received a top rating of 5 stars from employee users, with the average rating of all courses being 4.49 stars out of 5. There have been over 120,000 course enrolments in **groups of employees:** This includes initia- 12 months, demonstrating a profound learning culture at IU Group.





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# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY **AS A PRIORITY**

IU Group serves society in many ways – among other things, , by fostering female leadership and entrepreneurship, by making charitable donations, and by participating local community initiatives and volunteering.

It's especially important that this is part of our core activities: by integrating sustainability and social responsibility into our study courses, by carrying out research projects that focus on solving social problems, and by developing sustainable solutions that help us contribute to the evolution of the economy and society.

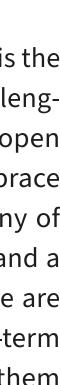
IU International University of Applied Sciences Our dual studies programmes, where students (IU), the flagship and core institution of IU receive their higher education while obtaining Group, employs and cooperates with some of practical experience by working with our partner organisations, have a strong social compothe brightest academics who are involved in nent as part of their very nature, as more than research projects and publishing works that push the sustainability agenda forward, both in half of our top-500 dual studies corporate part-Germany and internationally. We aim at introners are social, charitable, and/or humanitarian ducing study programmes that promote a susorganisations. IU is the largest educator of sotainable and socially responsible approach to cial workers in Germany, and this serves as an various aspects of business and management important illustration of how social welfare is a for the next generation of entrepreneurs and component of our DNA. Every third IU student is business leaders. a student of healthcare or pedagogy. Alongside

ALEX ČAIČICS, HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY AT IU GROUP

#### **"We embrace new** ides and are a source of them."

psychology, these fields make up close to 40% of our student body.

IU Group is a young organisation, and this is the source of both our strengths and our challenges. We are dynamic and flexible, we are open to innovation and diversity, and we embrace new ideas and are a source of them. Many of the things we do still need formalisation and a comprehensive strategic approach, but we are certain regarding our priorities and long-term goals, and we are advancing towards them year by year.







# **Over** 53,000

students study healthcare, social work, pedagogy and psychology at IU International University of Applied Sciences, making up about 36% of our total student body.

## 136 out of **200**

of IU's largest dual studies corporate partners are social, charitable and/or humanitarian organisations.









## **NINE TIMES AROUND THE WORLD FOR BETTER ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

"For each other, with each other – Around the world together!" was the motto of the IU Fitness Challenge in 2023. Within IU Group, 1,270 colleagues formed over 100 teams and collectively covered 345,357 kilometres through different sports activities. For each length of the Earth's equator, IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) donated ten bicycles to World Bicycle Relief (WBR). As a result, IU Group donated a total of can access education to grow", and we got closer to this goal. 100 bicycles this year.

The donation campaign supports people in rural developing regions, where access to education, healthcare, and professional opportunities is challenging, especially for girls and women due to cultural norms. WBR provides bicycles to improve mobility, independence, and financial self-sufficiency. Seventy percent of the bicycles are allocated to female recipients to address their isadvantage. In rural areas with limited public infrastructure, bicycles are a

reliable, cost-efficient, and resource-saving means of transportation, helping to shorten long distances to school, work, and grocery shopping.

The 2023 IU Fitness Challenge supported our vision "everybody" The annual Fitness Challenge is also taking place in 2024.



Reza Moussavian, **Chief People Officer** 

"We are proud that so many colleagues took part in our Fitness Challenge, even more than last year. We have repeated the campaign this year because it is a great way to strengthen team spirit among ourselves, to do something good for one's own well-being – both physically and mentally – and to take small steps towards our big IU vision: Providing access to education for people around the world. With World Bicycle Relief and the donated bicycles, as one of many initiatives, we are coming closer to this goal."

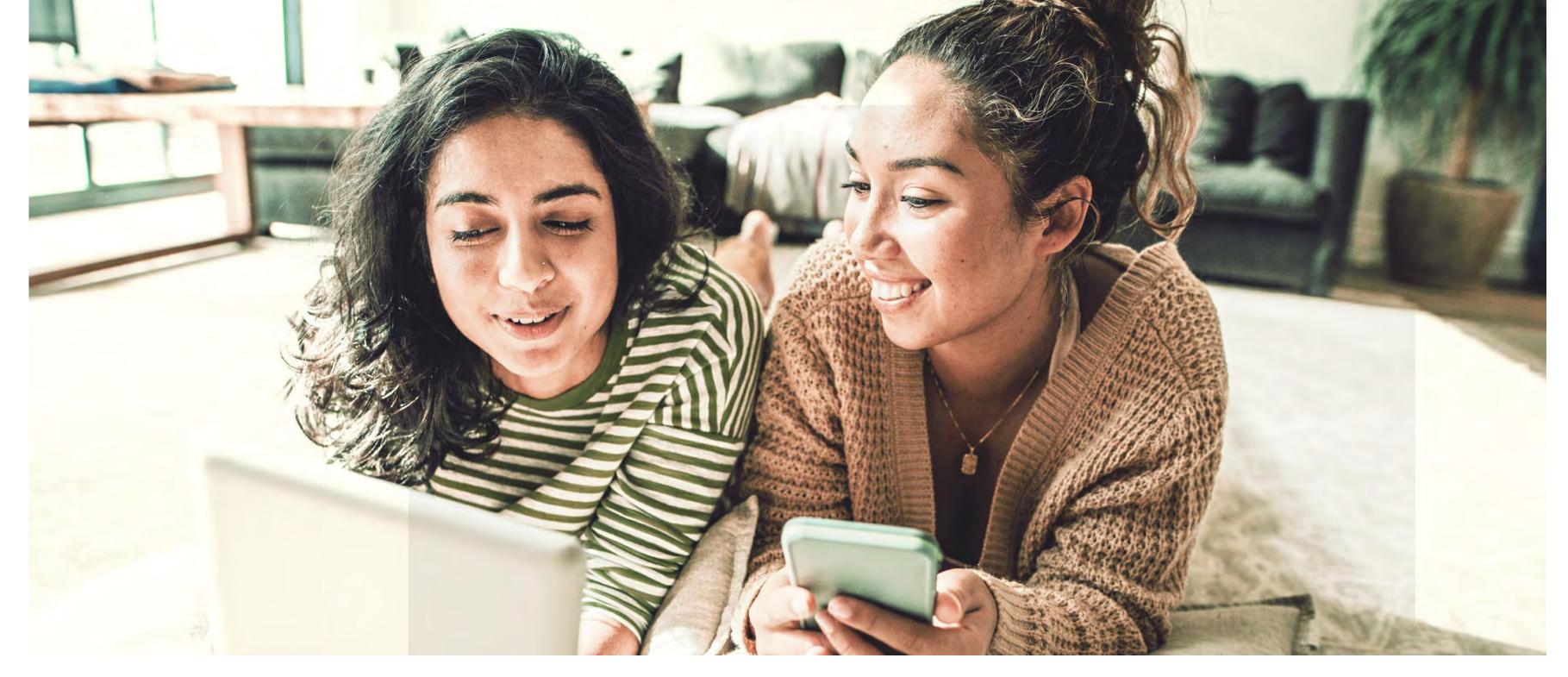






## **WE FEMALE FOUNDERS**

In Germany, women constitute only 20% of start-up founders, making them more of an exception than the norm. In a bid to bolster support for these entrepreneurs and foster greater diversity within the start-up ecosystem, IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU), in collaboration with its partner FSIWS, launched the "We Female Founders" project – an online programme inaugurated in 2021 and tailored for women with sustainable and innovative business concepts. Central to the initiative is the provision of an AI-driven networking platform, offering a secure environment for female founders to address pertinent issues, forge connections, and participate in knowledge-sharing and networking activities aimed at fostering growth and support. Through this platform, participants can not only refine and promote their ideas but also tap into the wealth of experiences and expertise offered by their peers, while also accessing potential direct contacts, including angel investors, for additional



support and mentorship. It serves as a vital avin conjunction with the Female Investors enue for women to nurture and elevate their Network (FIN) we released a study titled entrepreneurial ambitions. "Female Business Angels in Germany". As part During 2023, the We Female Founders proof a long-term cooperation with esteemed inject accompanied over 30 female founders on stitutions like the University of Heidelberg, TU their entrepreneurial paths, reaching a total of Darmstadt, and others, we launched a series of startup seminars with well-known found-160 participants. Through a series of seminars, 16 experts shared their knowledge on a range ers such as prominent German entrepreneur of topics spanning from creativity methods and Lea-Sophie Cramer.

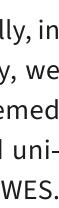
The project's success led to its inclusion in self-management to tech and AI, emphasising the significance of networking and perfecting EXIST Women, the female startup funding prothe art of pitching. Among other initiatives, gramme led by the German Federal Ministry for

Economic Affairs and Climate Protection, enabling us to pair 10 founders with mentors from our network.

As we embark on our fourth round, accompanied by mentors and our EXIST scholars, we're excited to continue our journey. Additionally, in celebration of International Women's Day, we launched an event series featuring esteemed speakers in collaboration with renowned universities such as TUM, Uni Paderborn, and WES.

#### **CO** More information









## **IU AND LIBF JOIN HESI**



In 2023, IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) and The London Institute of Banking and Finance (LIBF) joined the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), a collaborative platform that brings together United Nations entities and higher education institutions to promote sustainable development. HESI, initiated in 2012 and co-chaired by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), aims to enhance the role of universities in advancing sustainability through cooperation and policy advocacy. The membership of IU Group institutions underscores their dedication to sustainability and global citizenship. Through participation in HESI, IU and LIBF will engage in discussions and initiatives focussed on sustainability, facilitating knowledge exchange, and improving collaboration with other prestigious institutions. This commitment reinforces our efforts to embed sustainable practices throughout our operations and ethos.



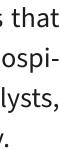
## **IU PROFESSOR GUEST EDITS PRESTIGIOUS YEARBOOK ON ESG AND THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

Professor Willy Legrand from IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) has been selected as the Chief Guest Editor for this year's "Hotel Yearbook Hospitality ESG Edition". In his foreword, he emphasises the significance of ESG principles in today's competitive landscape, particularly in the hospitality industry. Willy Legrand underscores the importance of leveraging innovation to address sustainability challenges, advocating for a regenerative approach and the exploration of sustainable innovation. He highlights the concept of an "innovation stack", comprising technologies, methods, and strategies that can revolutionise hospitality operations, ultimately leading to more resilient and fushowcase sustainable technologies, systems, and practices that ture-ready businesses. can be integrated holistically to create a more sustainable hospi-He stresses the pressure on industry players to commit to ESG tality ecosystem. This edition targets senior executives, analysts, consultants, and opinion leaders in the global hotel industry. performance, driven by demands from investors, regulators, distributors, and guests for transparent and trustworthy information. The "Hotel Yearbook 2024 Hospitality ESG Edition" aims to **CO More information** 

#### **CO** More information











## **SYMPOSIUM ON SUSTAINABLE MEDIA BY IU**

Symposium on Sustainable Media The and Brand Management, organised by IU International University of Applied Sciences in Hamburg in November 2023, convened scholars, media professionals, and brand experts to delve into sustainable practices within the media and marketing industry.

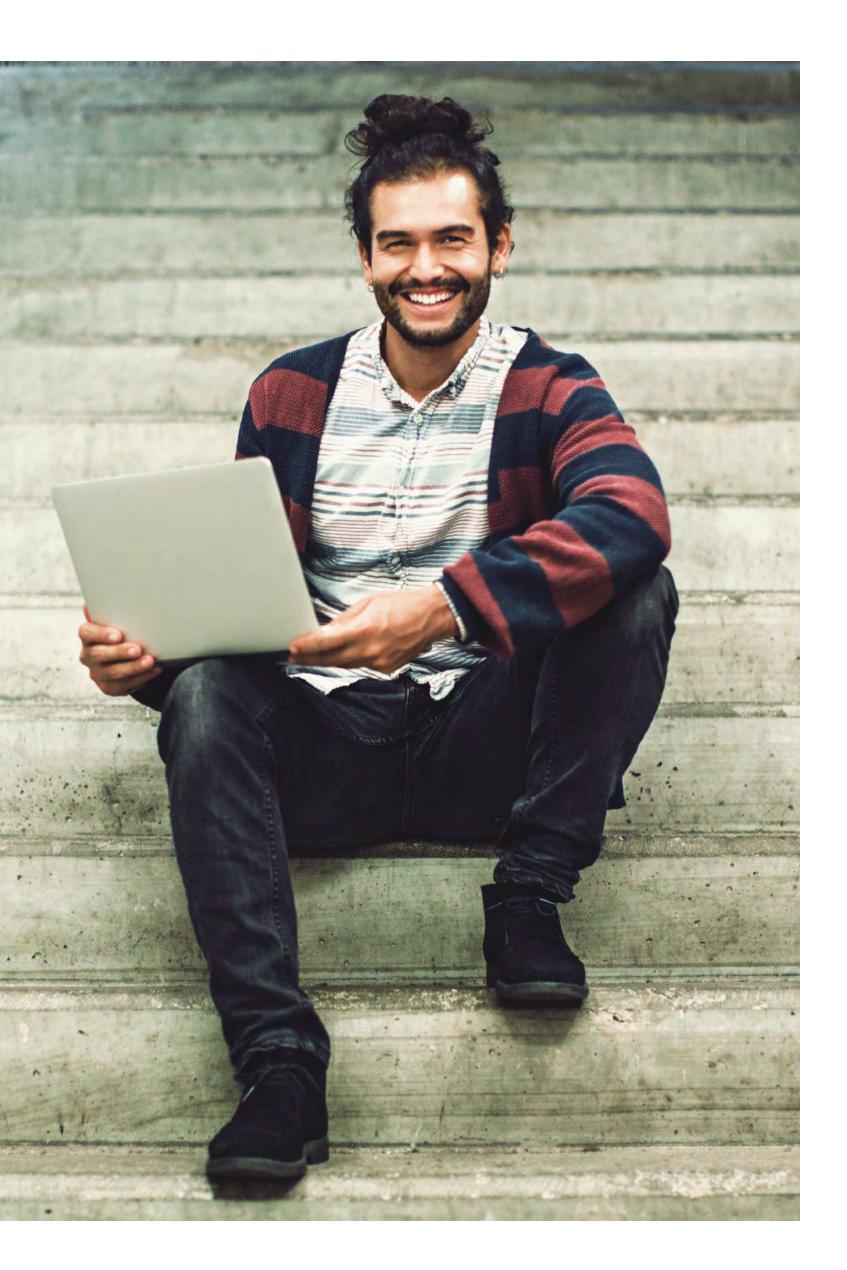
The discussions underscored the imperative for brands, agencies, and media outlets to operate sustainably, extending beyond mere carbon neutrality and resource conservation. A central theme was the scrutiny of online advertising campaigns and their significant contribution to global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, prompting a call for more sustainable approaches within the industry. Moreover, there was a notable emphasis on collaboration between agencies and companies to ble communication.



in the 21st century, emphasising criteria that Alongside climate-related sustainability, sotranscend traditional ESG considerations. cietal sustainability emerged as a focal point, highlighting the role of media and brands in ef-Participants discussed initiatives to establish fecting societal change beyond ecological concommon industry standards and guidelines for drive sustainability efforts and foster responsi- cerns. The symposium also tackled the chalethical marketing practices. lenge of defining and measuring media quality The event was part of a research project **CD More information** 

spearheaded by Prof. Dr. Lisa Wolter in collaboration with the University of Florida's Consortium on Trust in Media and Technology, led by Dr. Sylvia Chan-Olmsted.







**STUDY ON YOUNG MEN'S INTEREST IN WORKING IN SOCIAL SECTOR** 



## **IU ALUMNI AWARD GOES TO A PIONEER IN SUSTAINABLE SHIPPING** SOLUTIONS

IU International University of Applied Sciences conducted a study in Germany focussed on young men's interest in pursuing careers in the social sector. Despite a notable interest in social and educational topics among male school students, the study revealed that only 21.8% of respondents would consider training or studying in this field. Additionally, over half of those surveyed (51.3%) expressed little to no

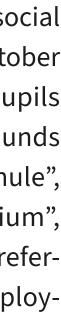
interest in pursuing careers in the social sector. The study, conducted in October 2022 and involving 620 male pupils from various educational backgrounds including "Hauptschule", "Realschule", "Fachoberschule", and "Gymnasium", sheds light on the attitudes and preferences of young men regarding employment in the social sector.

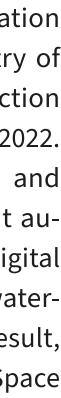
**CO** More information

#### Lars Holger Engelhard, founder and CEO of Unleash Future Boats GmbH, received this year's IU Alumni Award in the sustainability category.

With his company, Lars has set himself the goal of revolutionising the shipping industry and significantly reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. To achieve this, Unleash Future Boats is focussing on the development of emission-free, autonomous ships with electric drives and fuel cells based on an award-winning technology. In addition, Unleash Future Boats was awarded the Reallabore Innovation Prize 2022 by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Climate Protection BMWK, as well as the Vision Award 2022. The Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport BMDV and the relevant authorities authorised the largest digital test field on the Schlei federal waterway for Lars and his team. As a result, he partnered with the European Space Agency ESA.

#### **CO** More information









## **IU SUPPORTS** EARTHQUAKE **VICTIMS IN TÜRKIYE AND SYRIA**

IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) raised 100,000 euros within a week to aid earthquake victims in the Turkish-Syrian border region. One-third of the funds came from IU students and staff, with the remaining two-thirds donated by IU itself. The donations were split equally between the United Nations Children's Fund and the "Aktion Deutschland hilft" alliance. Additionally, IU offered 100 to individuals impacted by the earthquakes. The initiative garnered over 700 individual donations, reflecting widespread sympathy and solidarity within the IU community.





## **IU DIVERSITY AWARD GOES TO BACHELOR THESIS ON CARING FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES WITH** DISABILITIES

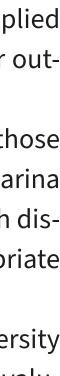
#### **CO** More information

Katharina Babl, a graduate in social work from IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU), was awarded the IU Diversity Award in the first half of 2023 for her outstanding bachelor's thesis.

The thesis focussed on structural care for refugees with disabilities, particularly those from Ukraine currently living in the Traunstein district of Bavaria in Germany. Katharina Babl conducted interviews with affected individuals to explore how refugees with disabilities are identified and supported in Germany, ensuring they receive appropriate assistance and are connected with relevant counselling centres.

The IU Diversity Award, presented twice a year since 2018, aims to highlight diversity research. A jury comprised of 10 members from various university departments evaluates submissions from IU students worldwide.

CO More information







## **IU STUDENTS DEVELOP TOURISM CONCEPT FOR A REGION AFFECTED BY NATURAL DISASTER**

In July 2021, a flood devastated the Ahrtal region in Germany, causing significant damage to its tourism infrastructure. Two years later, 50 students from IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU), along with four professors, collaborated on interdisciplinary projects aimed at revitalising the region's tourism sector. Their goal was not only to restore Ahrtal's appeal to visitors but also to provide a blueprint for other regions facing similar crises.

The students' proposals ranged from hosting festivals to constructing new attractions such as a suspension rope bridge and a wave facility for water sports. Additionally, proposals for short-term measures included implementing a regional and sustainable food concept and creating an interactive flood hike to educate visitors about the natural disaster.

Through close collaboration with local businesses, IU students gained valuable insights



into the needs of the region's tourism industry, leading to innovative, high-quality proposals. These projects not only demonstrate IU's commitment to practical and interdisciplinary education but also highlight the importance of crisis management in the tourism sector.

#### **CO** More information



## **SUSTAINABLE** ARCHITECTURE **AND DESIGN:** YEARBOOK **CO-AUTHORED BY AN IU PROFESSOR**

Everyone is calling for more sustainability in the construction industry. But what does that actually look like? Tina Kammer, professor of sustainable architecture at IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) and her co-author Andrea Herold present 50 sustainable building projects worldwide in "Sustainable Architecture & Design 2023/2024" that are intended to inspire and encourage imitation. The sustainability yearbook presents exemplary projects in urban planning, architecture, interior design, and building materials. It is divided into five categories and shows transformation trends and innovations, focussing on all relevant topics of sustainable transformation development: the use of resources, circular processes, biodiversity, and much more. Tina Kammer's involvement as a professor in sustainable architecture adds academic rigour and expertise to the publication, ensuring that it provides valuable insights into cutting-edge sustainable practices and developments in the construction industry.

CO More information







## **NEW BOOK ON DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN HR CO-AUTHORED BY IU PROFESSOR**

Dr. Sonja Würtemberger, a professor at IU International University of Applied Sciences, has co-authored a new book on diversity management in HR with Dr. Eva Voss from BNP Paribas. The book offers practical knowledge on integrating diversity management into HR processes throughout the employee lifecycle, from recruitment to offboarding. It includes tools, tips for handling resistance, guidance on measurement parameters and key performance indicators, and explanations of terms for readers without an academic background. It is targeted at practitioners, including business professionals, diversity managers, HR executives, CSR managers, and entrepreneurs. The book emphasises the importance of diversity management for success. Titled "Vielfalt im Employee Lifecycle: Diversity Management in HR-Prozessen", it is available on Amazon and other platforms.

### **CO** More information



## WITH SUSTAINABILITY **AS A CORE COMPONENT: IU'S NEW DEGREE PROGRAMME IN AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT**

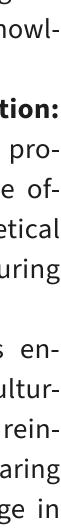
**IU International University of Applied Sciences has introduced** a cutting-edge bachelor of science in agricultural management programme, emphasising sustainability as its core component. This programme embodies IU's dedication to promoting sustainable agricultural practices and addressing contemporary challenges in the field. Key highlights include:

- Sustainability focus: The programme is designed to address pressing issues like climate change, animal welfare, and food security by promoting environmentally and socially responsible agricultural practices.
- Innovative curriculum: It incorporates the latest advancements in precision farming,

livestock management, renewable resources, and artificial intelligence, ensuring graduates are equipped with up-to-date knowledge and skills.

- Flexibility and real-world application: Offered fully online, the programme provides flexibility for participants while offering opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge to practical projects, ensuring they can make a tangible impact.
- Practical engagement: Participants engage in hands-on projects with agricultural businesses and in related sectors, reinforcing sustainable practices and preparing graduates to drive meaningful change in the industry.

#### **CO** More information





## 

# ENVIRONMENTAL

**FOOTPRINT** 





KAI MIELENHAUSEN, HEAD OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

"In 2023, despite a threefold growth of student numbers since 2019, we have managed to maintain low levels of carbon intensity"

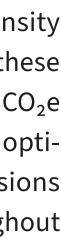
## **MAINTAINING LOW CARBON INTENSITY AND SUPPORTING CLIMATE PROJECTS**

For IU Group, 2023 was the first full year of office and campus usage at pre-pandemic levels of intensiveness. In addition, it was another year of active growth in our operations.

While our student numbers increased by 24% year-on-year, this only translated into a 15% increase in our total carbon footprint. IU Group

managed to maintain low carbon intensity numbers – according to preliminary data, these figures even decreased from 0.174 to 0.155 CO<sub>2</sub>e per student thanks to ongoing efforts to optimise resource usage and minimise emissions across all our offices and campuses throughout Germany, the UK and Canada.









As in previous years, IU Group has once again received carbon neutrality certification by TÜV SÜD and ClimatePartner, underscoring our ongoing dedication to minimising our environmental impact. Back in 2020, we became Germany's first provider of higher education to be officially certified as climate neutral by TÜV SÜD in accordance with the PAS2060 standard. Every year, we conduct an official recertification of our carbon-neutrality by organising an external audit of our carbon footprint.

In addition to maintaining a low carbon footprint compared to most other major universities, we compensated our GHG emissions for the year 2022 through five officially certified climate projects. These projects are aimed at preventing carbon emissions through improving access to clean drinking water and promoting renewable energy in communities in Sierra Leone, Malawi, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Uganda. Projects in these developing countries not only help offset our carbon emissions but also contribute to the well-being and resilience of these communities, fostering a more sustainable future for all.

We understand that carbon offsetting is not a solution to climate change and that more efforts

are needed to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Looking ahead, IU Group remains steadfast in its commitment to environmental stewardship, with ongoing efforts to further reduce our carbon footprint and to research possibilities to support carbon capture projects. From implementing energy-saving solutions at our offices and campuses to exploring opportunities for renewable energy procurement, we are dedicated to leading by example in the pursuit of a more sustainable future for education and beyond.

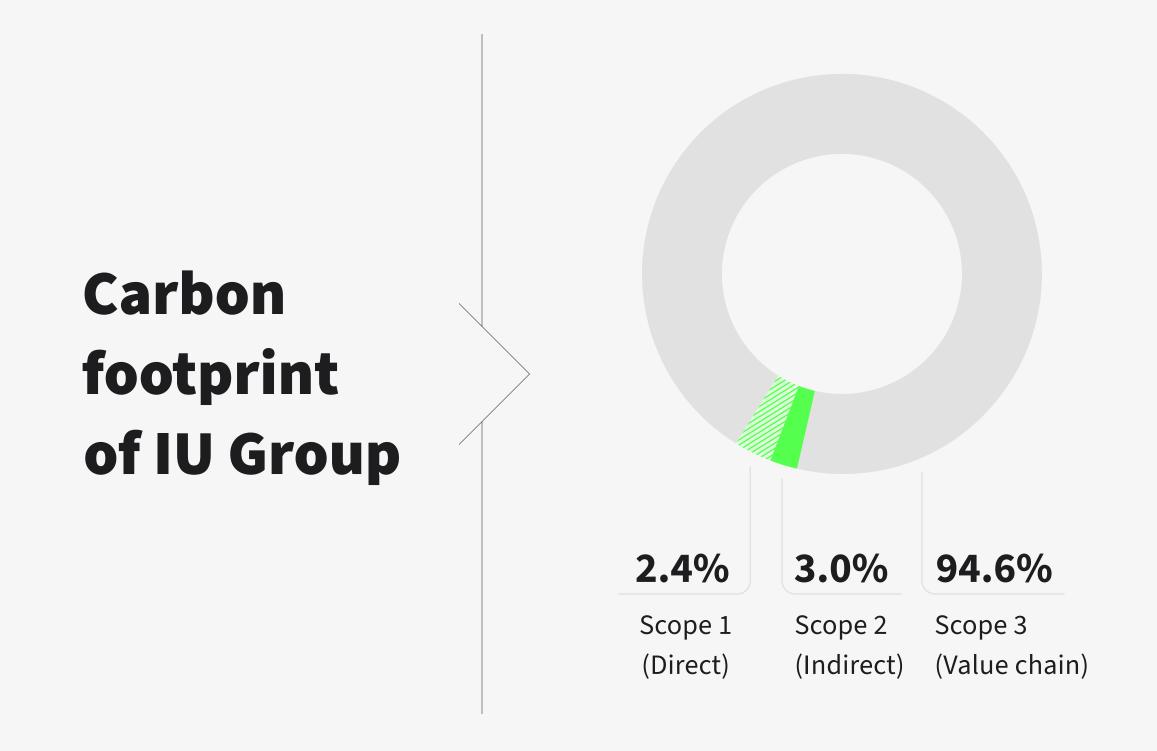
Environmental sustainability lies at the heart of IU Group's philosophy, reflecting our deep-seated commitment to fostering a world where ecological balance and human progress are in harmony. In 2023, we reinforced this commitment by introducing a comprehensive sustainability policy that outlines our strategic priorities in reducing our ecological footprint and promoting responsible environmental practices. Central to this policy is our focus on energy and climate, where we actively pursue energy-efficient technologies and renewable energy sources to power our operations, aligning with UN Sustainable Development Goals 7 and 13.





7 times lower greenhouse gas emissions per distance-learning student versus a regular off-line student

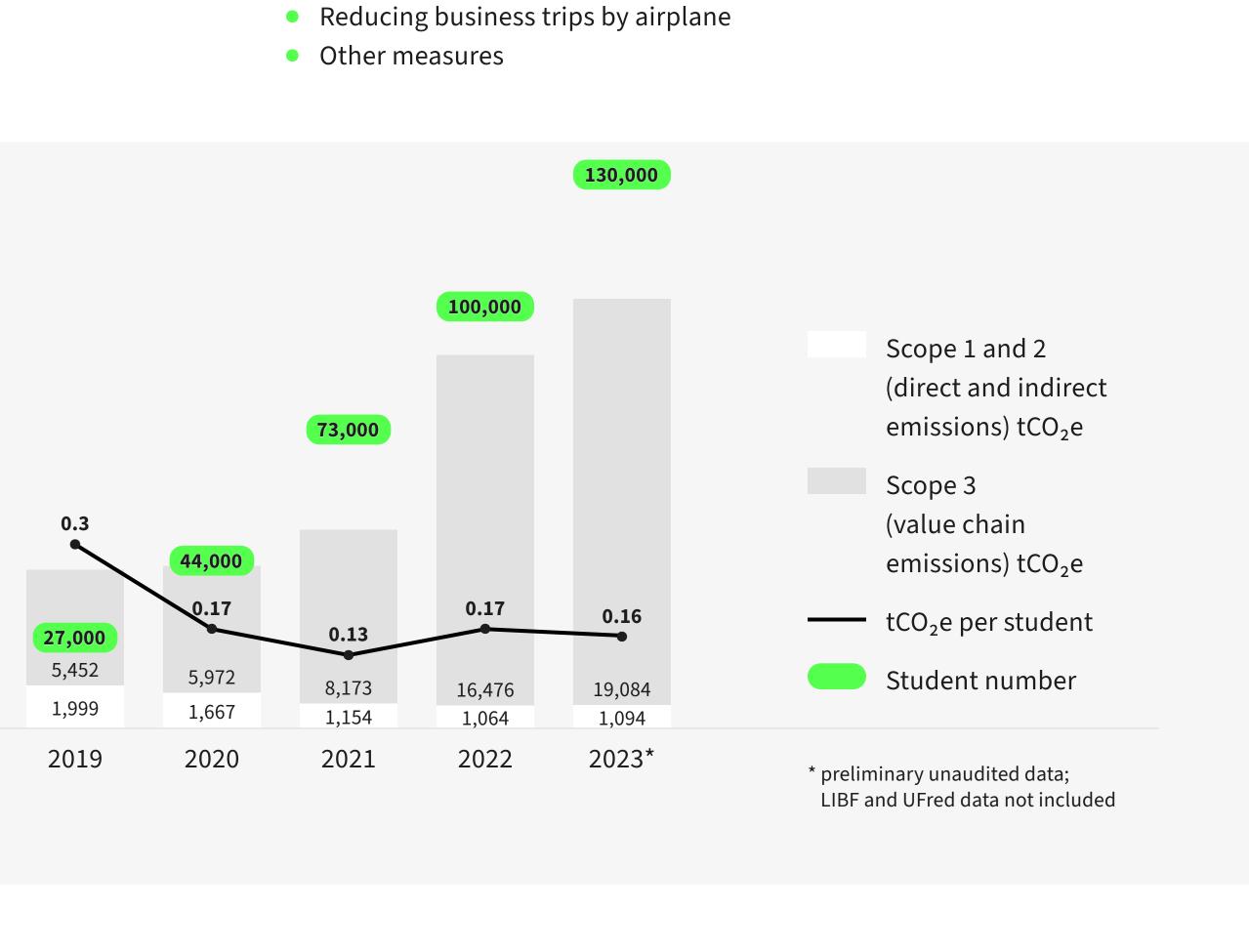
(Source: IU Group's own research, 2020)





### **Priority areas for the further reduction** of our carbon footprint currently include:

- Reducing the average energy use of offices
- Increasing the use of electricity from renewable energy sources
- Reducing the amount of ordered student lecture notes





## **COMPENSATION OF OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT: PROJECTS FINANCED** BY IU GROUP

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Climate neutrality has always been a focus for IU Group. We have made serious and continuous efforts toward climate protection in several ways, including through financial contributions to projects to offset our carbon footprint.



## **CLEAN DRINKING WATER FOR COMMUNITIES IN MALAWI**

This IU Group-financed Micro-Scale Voluntary Project Activity in Kasungu, Malawi provides safe drinking water to local communities, reducing the need to boil water as a means of purification through the repair of damaged infrastructure and the drilling of additional new boreholes in the Traditional Authorities of Santhe and Kawamba in Kasungu District. By providing safe water, the project will ensure that households consume less firewood during the process of water purification, and as a result there will be a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the combustion process.

**Carbon footprint** compensated 1,800 tonnes CO e 10% of IU Group's CCF for 2022

Certification standard



## **Gold Standard** VER (GS VER)







## **IMPROVED COOKSTOVES FOR COMMUNITIES IN UGANDA**

As part of this project, we support the replacement of conventional and less efficient cookstoves in Uganda with improved cookstoves. Three objectives are being pursued: reducing fuel consumption, improving the health of the population in Uganda, and reducing deforestation.

More than 90% of households in Uganda use firewood or charcoal for cooking. Because of this, cooking with wood is one of the main reasons for deforestation in the country. Since the improved cookstoves distributed as part of this programme are much more efficient – they use significantly less wood. This not only saves CO<sub>2</sub> emissions but also improves people's health by reducing indoor air pollution.

**Carbon footprint** compensated 1,800 tonnes CO e 10% of IU Group's CCF for 2022

Certification standard



## **Gold Standard** VER (GS VER)



## **CLEAN DRINKING WATER FOR COMMUNITIES IN CAMBODIA**

With the help of this project, 1.7 million people in Cambodia receive clean drinking water through ceramic water filtration systems. The filtration is based on an ancient method in which the water seeps through baked clay. The pore size is so small that it removes up to 99.99% of impurities. Every hour, 2–3 litres of water flow through a ceramic vessel into a storage tank. One filtration system covers the needs of a family of five.

The water purifier eliminates the need to boil water with wood or charcoal. It prevents CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, reduces air pollution, lowers fuel costs and helps protect Cambodia's endangered forests.

**Carbon footprint** compensated 1,800 tonnes CO e 10% of IU Group's CCF for 2022 Certification

**Gold Standard VER (GS VER)** 

standard







### **CLEAN DRINKING WATER FOR COMMUNITIES IN SIERRA LEONE**

This project is helping communities in the Kono region to restore 57 wells. In cooperation with the local population, damaged wells are repaired and regularly maintained, which secures the regional water supply. The availability of clean drinking water eliminates the need to boil water, saving CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Thus, it not only contributes to climate action but also impacts gender equality. Girls and women are particularly affected by poor water conditions due to their responsibility for the household water supply. Providing clean water through boreholes reduces their time spent collecting water and firewood, which can now be used for education or additional income.

**Carbon footprint** compensated 6,300 tonnes CO e 35% of IU Group's CCF for 2022

Certification standard

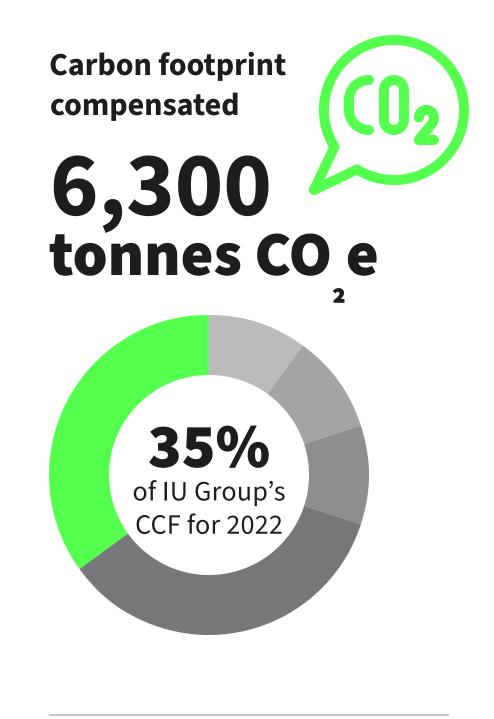


## **Gold Standard** VER (GS VER)



## **IMPROVED COOKSTOVES FOR COMMUNITIES IN RWANDA**

Traditionally, many Rwandan families cook over an open three-stone fire. This is inefficient and poses a serious threat to health due to heavy smoke pollution. This project enables households to reduce their wood consumption by providing efficient cooking stoves made of local clay and sand. The so-called Canarumwe model is produced by a local cooperative and consumes two-thirds less fuel than a threestone fire. The stoves are offered at a subsidised price so that low-income households can afford them.



Certification standard



## **Gold Standard VER (GS VER)**





GROUP



# GOVERNANCE





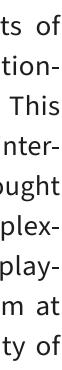
"IU Group is becoming a truly global player on the education market, and we aim at maintaining a corresponding high quality o corporate governance"

## **OUR MANAGEMENT IS COMMITTED TO PROFESSIONALISM AND EFFECTIVENESS**

As part of our B Corp certification, achieved in 2023, we have made an important addition to our Articles of Association, officially stating that one of IU Group's goals is to have a positive impact on society and the environment through our business operations and economic activities. This reflects the strategic nature of our mission to make education accessible to people around the world and to thereby contribute to global development.

Among IU Group's key corporate events of 2023 was the acquisition of two educational institutions overseas: LIBF and UFred. This opened new opportunities to expand our international educational offering and has brought us to a new level of organisational complexity. IU Group is becoming a truly global player on the education market, and we aim at maintaining a corresponding high quality of corporate governance.









In 2023 we also conducted an initial review of our supply chains from the point of view of environmental and social factors, as well as quality of governance. The vast majority of our suppliers are based in jurisdictions and come from sectors where risks of non-compliance with high standards of social responsibility and environmental sustainability are low – however, this does not make it less of a priority for us to be attentive to this issue. Our immediate plan is to continue monitoring our supply chain and to develop deeper cooperation with our suppliers on ESG issues.

IU, our main educational institution, has an Advisory Board made up of outstanding key opinion leaders in science, business, and poltechnology to enhance learning experiences. itics. The Advisory Board advises IU and IU His inclusion on the board will support our ef-Group in our further development, including forts to advance educational technology and strategic orientation, study formats, and globdevelop strategic AI-based initiatives. al growth towards maintaining our status as a IU Group's cornerstone internal document that globally competitive and attractive provider of ensures the upholding of stringent standards in digital education. corporate governance is our Ethics Policy, which In September 2023, the Advisory Board of IU undergoes constant refinement to align with the was joined by Sascha Lobo, a leading expert on diverse interests of our stakeholders.

IU Group effectively navigates its legal and regdigital topics and technologies as well as one of the leading minds in the current German debate ulatory landscape through our adept Legal on artificial intelligence. Sascha's renowned Department. This department maintains a steadfast commitment to ensuring adherence to reganalytical skills and profound understanding of AI's implications, particularly in education, ulatory frameworks across Germany and other jurisdictions. Furthermore, a compliance officer, align closely with IU's vision for leveraging

integrated within our Legal Department, ensures the enforcement of regulatory standards. We provide a whistle-blower hotline to facilitate communication with all stakeholders. Moreover, to foster inclusivity and equity, we've appointed a dedicated Diversity and Equality Officer for both students and employees. Additionally, our Accounting and Financial Team has designated a Senior Revisor to spearhead the implementation of an internal auditing and revision framework. In the realm of education, success hinges upon integrity and fairness. These values serve as the bedrock for fostering trust among our students, employees, corporate partners, and all other stakeholders.





## LEADERSHIP

### IU Group is led by a highly experienced and committed leadership team.



### Sven Schütt, CFO



Marvin Lange, Managing Director/CFO

Sven has led IU Group as CEO since 2010. His professional journey encompasses senior management roles within the education and public sectors, alongside significant experience in management consulting. He holds a PhD in Neurobiology from the Max Planck Institute, supplemented by degrees in Physics and Philosophy from the University of Bremen, as well as further studies in Neuroscience at the University of Göttingen and the University of Otago.

Holger assumed the role of Rector at IU Marvin has served as Managing Director and Carmen has contributed to IU Group for al-CFO at IU Group since January 2019. Before that, International University of Applied Sciences in most 10 years in various capacities, including he held several senior managerial positions in early 2021, following more than 15 years of ser-Chief Operating Officer for online studies and Germany and the United Kingdom, focussing on vice in multiple capacities within the institu-Director for Online Operations. Before joining finance and executive leadership. His educationtion. His roles included Management Professor, IU, she was involved in the Economics research Vice-Chancellor for Online Studies, and head of al background includes a degree in International department at a major university and worked Management from FOM and participation in exboth the distance learning department and IU's as a Management Consultant. Her academic ecutive programmes at INSEAD Business School, campus in Bad Reichenhall. Prior to his tenure background includes a PhD in Economics from Cranfield University, and Pfeiffer University. at IU, he held management positions within the Munich Graduate School of Economics, an various publishing companies across Germany, honours degree in Technology Management France, and the United States. Holger holds a from the Centre for Digital Technology and PhD in Management and Organisation, a mas-Management, and a degree in Economics from ter's degree in Management Research from the Ludwig Maximilian University. University of Oxford, and a degree in Economics from the Karlsruhe Institute for Technology.



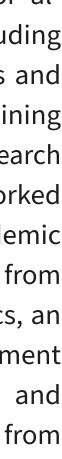
Holger Sommerfeldt, Rector



**Carmen Thoma**, Managing Director







## **ADVISORY** BOARD

IU International University of Applied Sciences (IU) maintains an Advisory Board comprised of renowned opinion leaders from science, business, and politics. With the expertise and diverse experience of its members in the central strategic fields of IU, the Advisory Board comprehensively advises IU Group's flagship institution in its further development, including strategic orientation, study formats, and global growth. IU Group's goal is to further expand its creative power as a driver of high-quality education both in Germany and internationally and to establish itself as a globally relevant provider of digital education.

Sascha Lobo is the newest member of the IU Advisory Board, having joined in September 2023. He is an expert in the field of artificial intelligence, which is currently among IU's priority areas of interest.

### **MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD**

**Dr. Frank Weise Chair of the IU Advisory Board** 

### **Prof. Dr. Tobias** Bonhoeffer

Director at the Max Planck Former Minister of Foreign Institute for Biological Affairs and Minister of Digital Intelligence (in foundation). **Economy and Planning** of the Republic of Mali.

### **Raffaela Rein**

EdTech expert, entrepreneur, formative protagonist in the European start-up, VC, and tech industries.

Former Chairman of the Executive Board of the German Federal Employment Agency from 2004 to 2017 and simultaneously Head of the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees between 2015 and 2016, Dr. Frank Weise is one of Germany's leading experts on the future of education and employment.

### Ambassador **Kamissa Camara**

### Dr. Karina Montilla **Edmonds**

SVP, Head of Academies and University Alliances at SAP.

### Sascha Lobo

Writer and journalist, leading expert on digital topics and technologies, including artificial intelligence.

### Lucy Stonehill

EdTech expert, founder of BridgeU, a service linking secondary school, higher education and professional life using datadriven decision-making.

### **Jimmy Wales**

Entrepreneur, founder of Wikipedia, advocate for the democratisation of knowledge.







## **SUSTAINABILITY AND SUPPLY CHAINS: RISK ASSESSMENT, GRIEVANCE MECHANISM**

In line with our commitment to ethical business practices and sustainability, IU Group has implemented a system to monitor and manage ESG-related risks in our supply chains.

IU Group conducts supplier ESG risk assessments, utilising both internal and external sources. Leveraging our existing supplier database, we categorised and analysed suppliers based on sectors, geographies, and risk factors. For immediate suppliers, a comprehensive supplier matrix is employed to assess risks and prioritise actions. Similarly, for indirect suppliers, public data scrutiny and proactive communication are utilised to address any identified violations. No high-risk suppliers were identified during this analysis in 2023.

In addition to risk analysis, IU Group works

on ensuring supplier compliance with ethical standards and regulations. All new and existing suppliers are required to confirm adherence to IU Group's Ethical Policy and Supplier Code of Conduct. Moreover, data processing and transfer agreements are established with relevant suppliers to uphold compliance with data privacy and security standards, such as GDPR.

To address grievances, IU Group established a complaint management system accessible via our website at www.iu-group.com get-in-touch#contact and in our intranet resources. Internal and external stakeholders can report any breaches or concerns, which are then reviewed by a specialised team of sustainability and procurement experts. As of the reporting period, no complaints have been lodged.



## **ETHICS** POLICY



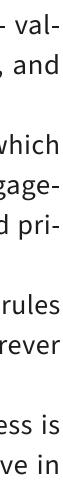
The Ethics Policy is IU Group's key document covering the most important areas of corporate governance and ethics within the framework of the applicable laws, rules, and normative regulations. It sets out the ethical principles of IU Group and provides general guidelines to protect against corruption, economic crime, conflicts of interest, and other misconduct. The topics covered by the policy include personal responsibility, honest conduct, corporate citizenship, integrity, accounting practices, privacy and confidentiality, respectful treatment, and more.

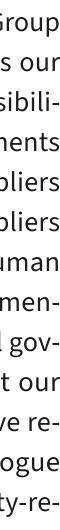
### The Ethics Policy sets out the following ethical principles of IU Group:

**1.** We conduct ourselves with honesty, integrity, and according to the highest ethical with our business partners on sustainability-restandards.

- **2.** We seek, and are open to, diversity valuing diversity of people, their views, and their experiences.
- **3.** We contribute to the communities in which we work and live through civic engagement, both globally as a company and privately as individuals.
- **4.** We observe and comply with the laws, rules and regulations that apply to us wherever in the world we operate.
- 5. We believe that the way we do business is as important as the results we achieve in doing so.

An important part of the Ethics Code of IU Group is the Supplier Code of Conduct. It reflects our understanding of corporate social responsibility and sustainability, setting our requirements and approach to doing business with suppliers and contractors. IU Group expects its suppliers to be socially responsible and respect human rights, to meet high standards of environmental performance, and to implement ethical governance and business practices. We want our Supplier Code of Conduct to be an effective real-life guide and a basis for a broad dialogue lated issues.









## **STRENGTHENING IT SECURITY** FOR TRUST AND COMPLIANCE

Over the past year, IU Group has taken significant strides to fortify our IT security, placing paramount importance on safeguarding student data and ensuring the reliability of our services. Committed to meeting the stringent standards of European and German data security regulations, we've made notable progress in several key areas.

One of our achievements includes the implementation of a specialised system for asset and risk management. This system enables us to record and monitor all company assets, identify potential risks, and implement proactive measures to mitigate them. By enhancing our risk management approach, we're better equipped to safeguard our resources effectively.

Furthermore, we've upgraded our Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) system, expanding its capabilities by integrating additional systems. This upgrade significantly strengthens our ability to monitor and protect our IT infrastructure, enabling us to swiftly detect and respond to potential threats.

A pivotal milestone this year has been the comprehensive mapping of our data processing activities. This detailed overview provides invaluable insights into how data is managed across our organisation, ensuring that our security and privacy measures align with regulatory requirements and industry best practices. In our ongoing commitment to data protection, TÜV and establishing our Information Security we're in the process of implementing a central data protection management system. This initi-Management System (ISMS), we remain dedicated to fortifying our cybersecurity framework. ative aims to streamline our privacy policies and procedures, fostering consistency and continuous Our proactive measures, including employee improvement in our approach to data security. awareness initiatives and regular simulations Reflecting on past achievements, such as sucand tests, underscore our unwavering commitment to safeguarding sensitive information. cessfully passing an IT audit conducted by



In essence, our efforts over the past year have centred on bolstering our security measures to uphold the trust and safety of our educational environment. As we continue to prioritise data security and privacy, we remain steadfast in our commitment to meeting the expectations of our students and stakeholders.





## **OFFICIAL** ACCREDITATION

IU International University of Applied Sciences is accredited by key German state institutions. Official accreditation not only requires the fulfilment of formal requirements regarding academic standards but is also an assessment of the quality of staff, equipment, and the quality management system.

- State accreditation
- **Institutional accreditation:** The next review is in 2026. On 22 January 2021, the German Wissenschaftsrat (Council of Science and Humanities) granted reaccreditation to IU for a period of five years.
- System accreditation: On 4 December 2018, the FIBAA Accreditation Committee for Institutional Procedures granted system accreditation to IU until the end of the summer semester of 2025. Being system-accredited gives the university the right to approve its own programmes in accordance with legally defined standards.
- **Programme accreditations:** All study programmes offered by IU International University of Applied Sciences are accredited internally, with an external review to confirm that the study programmes meet all necessary quality requirements of the German Accreditation Council.











IU is a registered online Cambridge International School.





HESI Higher Education Sustainability Initiative









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## CONTACTS

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#### LEGAL NOTICE

IU Group N.V. ("IU Group"), the holding company behind IU International University of Applied Sciences ("IU"), The London Institute of Banking and Finance ("LIBF"), and the University of Fredericton ("UFred") is a private university group. IU Group strives to keep its materials up to date, accurate and complete. Nevertheless, and despite careful processing of information, it cannot be entirely ruled out that errors occur. When referring to IU as a "university" in the text of this report, the official status of "university of applied sciences" (German: "Hochschule") in accordance with the German classification of institutions of higher education is understood, unless stated otherwise.